

ADA279518

USAWC STRATEGIC RESEARCH PROJECT

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

THE NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY OF 1864,
WHO WAS THE AUTHOR?

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

Lieutenant Colonel Burton W. Tulkki
United States Army

Dr. Jay Luvaas
Project Advisor

U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
April 22, 1994

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:
Approved for public release;
distribution is unlimited.

Accesion For	
NTIS	CRA&I
DTIC	TAB
Unannounced	
Justification _____	
By _____	
Distribution / _____	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Avail and / or Special
A-1	

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED	
	22 April 1994	Study Project	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The National Military Strategy of 1864, Who Was the Author?			5. FUNDING NUMBERS
6. AUTHOR(S) TULKKI, Burton W., LTC			
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College Root Hall, Bldg 122 Carlisle Barracks Carlisle, PA 17013-5050		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES			
12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.		12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE	
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) This paper looks at the National Military Strategy of 1864 which successfully brought an end to the Civil War. It asks the question who was the author? The National Military Strategy of 1864 was formulated at a meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio in March of 1864 but no records exist. Two generals, U.S. Grant and W.T. Sherman are examined as the most likely candidates. The paper looks at each general's experience, personality, and relationship with each other. It explains each man's strategic concepts and what contribution he made to the strategy formulation. The paper concludes that the successful strategy of 1864 was a result of the synergism of the two men's ideas on how to win the war. It was a masterful blend of their best ideas and it accommodated each man's personal strengths. It was possible because of an extraordinary relationship and bond between the two men. This relationship not only led to a successful strategy but also masterful execution that doomed the Confederacy.			
14. SUBJECT TERMS			15. NUMBER OF PAGES
			16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UL

NSN 7540-01-280-5500

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 2-89)
Prescribed by ANSI Std Z39-18
298-102

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Burton W. Tulkki, LTC, USA

TITLE: The National Military Strategy of 1864, Who Was the Author?

FORMAT: Individual Study Project

DATE: 22 Apr 94 PAGES: 30 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

This paper looks at the National Military Strategy of 1864 which successfully brought an end to the Civil War. It asks the question who was the author? The National Military Strategy of 1864 was formulated at a meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio in March of 1864 but no records exist. Two generals, U.S. Grant and W.T. Sherman are examined as the most likely candidates. The paper looks at each general's experience, personality, and relationship with each other. It explains each man's strategic concepts and what contribution he made to the strategy formulation.

The paper concludes that the successful strategy of 1864 was a result of the synergism of the two men's ideas on how to win the war. It was a masterful blend of their best ideas and it accommodated each man's personal strengths. It was possible because of an extraordinary relationship and bond between the two men. This relationship not only led to a successful strategy but also masterful execution that doomed the Confederacy.

The National Military Strategy of 1864,
Who Was the Author?

Introduction

The early spring of 1864 was a watershed time for the Union. The North had won important victories at Gettysburg and at Vicksburg in the summer of 1863 and at Chattanooga in late 1863. It was now time to go on a great offensive to defeat the South and end the war.

President Abraham Lincoln nominated General U.S. Grant for the rank of Lieutenant General and to command all armies of the United States. On 4 March Grant went to Washington, D.C. to talk to Lincoln, be promoted and to discuss his new duties. Grant returned to the West on 10 March to complete his unfinished business. He named General William Tecumseh Sherman to succeed him as commander of the Military Division of Mississippi.

On 18 March Sherman assumed command in Nashville, Tennessee and immediately accompanied Grant on his journey East as far as Cincinnati, Ohio. He did this, as he wrote in his memoirs, "to avail myself the opportunity to discuss privately many little details incident to the contemplated changes, and of the preparation for the great events then impending."¹ Grant and Sherman were together often between 18 and 24 March when Sherman left for Nashville and Grant to the East.

There is no official record of the meeting. Many have speculated but all we know for sure is that out of the meeting

came the National Military Strategy for 1864. This strategy was implemented in the spring and led to the defeat of the South.

Who was the author of the strategy, Grant, Sherman or both? Which had the major influence? It was the product of an extraordinary synergism between Grant and Sherman. Each came to the meeting with strong views, some of them complementary and others which were opposing. What resulted was a strategy developed by both men that adapted the ideas of each. They agreed on the final strategy, embraced it and executed it to end the war. It was a masterpiece, flexible enough to capitalize on the strength of each general. It was cemented by their extraordinary and unquestioning friendship and respect for each other.

The Meeting

The meeting in Cincinnati was one of the most important meetings of the war.

In the parlor of the Burnet House in Cincinnati, bending over maps, the two generals, who had so long been inseparable planed together....the great campaigns of Richmond and Atlanta.....and, grasping one another firmly by the hand, separated, one to the East, the other to the West, each to strike at the same instant, his half of the ponderous deathblow.²

Neither general wrote about the meeting, a surprising fact in that both were prolific writers and wrote often to fellow generals, to friends and to family. Sherman wrote religiously to his brother, Senator John Sherman, often expressing his feelings and thoughts on important events. Both saved their letters and

they survive today in their memoirs and other publications. But there is no record of the meeting. Grant wrote letters from Nashville on the 15th, 16th, 17th and made a speech on the 18th. But there is no recorded letter between the 18th and 24th of March, the time of the travel to and the actual meetings in Cincinnati. Sherman apparently also wrote no letters during this period.

Results of these meetings are pieced together only by looking at later letters that start to give implementation instructions. Grant wrote General Henry Halleck, The Chief of Staff of the Union Army, on 30 March saying, "All veterans should report to the command to which they belong except when specially ordered otherwise--all recruits and new organizations from Ohio and states east of it, I would advise, ordered to assemble at Washington and those from states west of Ohio to be rendezvoused at Louisville."³ He notified Generals Don Carlos Butler and Nathaniel Banks, two of his army commanders, on 2 April to start coordination of the impending offensive.⁴ Grant wrote Sherman on 4 April outlining all orders he had sent to Butler, Banks, and General Franz Sigel concerning the spring offensive. "But all I can now direct is that you get ready as soon as possible."⁵ Sherman's letter answering Grant of 10 April outlines his preparation and implementation of the plan saying, "Your two letters of April 4 are now before me, and afford me infinite satisfaction."⁶

There is no record of the meeting, no recorded thoughts.

Sherman was satisfied with his instructions. He wrote Grant on 10 April 1864, "We are now all to act on a common plan, converging on a common center, looks like enlightened war."⁷ The campaign was set and the Union Armies were moving. The question remains. Who was the most influential player at this meeting? Some keys to the answer are found looking at the two players.

Sherman's Character

William Tecumseh Sherman was a man of definite views of right and wrong and saw very little gray in between. He was focused, practical, systematic, detail oriented, and relied on his experiences. He was firm, logical and organized. Sherman was an adaptive flexible planner who liked schedules. He clearly saw the big picture and analyzed and understood complex situations.

It is interesting to speculate what Sherman's personality preference was using the Myers-Briggs methodology. Sherman fits an ESTJ profile. He was an extrovert who relied on sensing, thinking and judgment over intuition, feeling and perceptions. This personality type is good at analysis, holds consistently to a policy, weighs the law of evidence, and stands firm against opposition. He can be prone to emotional outbursts or show of anger and can take criticism personally.⁸ There are many examples of this type behavior in Sherman's career. One is his hostility against the press. Commenting on his reaction to their

criticism to his failed attack at Vicksburg, Sherman wrote Admiral Porter on 1 February 1983:

The Northern press, stimulated by parties here, have sown broadcast over our country the most malicious charges and insinuations against me personally, in consequence of my failure to reduce Vicksburg. I have some friends that will, I know, be sadly troubled by these reports.⁹

Sherman's personality was strong but he also had weaknesses. An ESTJ is frustrated by complications and can misunderstand others values. An ESTJ has little interest in mercy or conciliation and is stubborn and judgmental.¹⁰ This personality preference is inflexible, a trait not found in Sherman. He exhibits this ESTJ thinking in his view on how to treat southerners, covered later in this paper. He also shows it in his discontent with politicians, politics and the complicated political process, not always logical or just. His flexibility in the conduct of campaigns such as Atlanta shows he had most but not every trait common to an ESTJ.

Sherman's Experience

After graduation from West Point in 1840, his early military career, though marked by dedicated service to the country, was not distinguished. He left the army in 1853 and was involved in banking, law and education. At the eve of the Civil War he was out of the army and though not a failure, was not entirely successful in any of his life's pursuit. His early military service in the Civil War did much to shape his future

philosophies of campaigning and war.

Sherman was cited for bravery and leadership at First Bull Run. He was a division commander under Grant's command at the battle of Shiloh, forming the right wing of Grant's line. Grant relates, "a number of attacks were made by the enemy to turn the right flank, where Sherman was poised, but every effort was repulsed with heavy loss."¹¹ Sherman learned important lessons at this battle. The problems associated with a frontal attack were made clear. This was an important event that helped cement the Sherman-Grant relationship, a relationship very important in the formulation of the strategy of 1864.

Sherman's Thoughts

Sherman was thinking on the strategic level as early as 1861. On 22 April he wrote his brother, "the question of the national integrity and slavery should be kept distinct, for otherwise it will gradually become a war of extermination,-- a war without end." He went on to offer his assessment on the strength of Washington and other garrisons along the east coast.¹² In letters of May 1861 he wrote about the importance of keeping the border states of Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas and the importance of the Mississippi River as the great problem of the Civil War.¹³ At this early point in the war Sherman was already thinking about Grand Strategy.

Sherman's concept of strategy was cemented in his mind

during the Vicksburg Campaign. After slugging it out with the Confederate Army for many months, Vicksburg fell only after the Union Army cut away from the supply line and cut the Confederate lifeline. Liddell Hart in his biography Sherman writes:

The campaign revealed to him, more clearly than any other previous experience, that strategy is not merely a forerunner but the master of tactics, that the purpose of strategy is to minimize fighting and that it fulfills this purpose by playing on the minds of the opponent, so as to disturb him to upset his balance of mind. The campaign revealed to him also that in war unexpectedness and mobility are the master-keys of generalship--- opening many doors which no physical weight can force--- and it demonstrated, in particular, the incalculable value of deception and of cutting loose from communications.¹⁴

Sherman showed he was a strategic thinker. He thought at this level before the war and early in the war as a brigade commander. He continued to grasp strategic concepts at every opportunity. Sherman learned by what he observed and came to the meeting with Grant well prepared. He was one of the Union Generals who understood strategic thinking.

Sherman and Total War

Sherman brought to the meeting a definite view on how to fight a war. His time as a banker in San Francisco and his time as a lawyer gave him insights to what was important to the people. He understood that a nation's army derived its strength and support from the people. He understood the importance of the well being of the people for them to believe in the cause and to fight for it.

Sherman believed that resisting power of a modern democracy depends more on the popular will then on the strength of the armies. This popular will often depends on economic and social security.¹⁵ Thus, Sherman believed in taking war to the people.

Sherman legitimized this concept by rationalizing the immoral aspects. Sherman was extremely patriotic and had a very strong idea of right and wrong. In his view the South had seceded from the Union and had given up all rights as citizens of the United States. He reasoned, based on their choice of succession, that Southerners were not protected under the laws and were subject to his total war theories. He believed that law and war were opposite states. War began when law broke down.¹⁶ The South had declared war. It was subject to all the consequences of total war until conquered and it came back to the Union. He was unbending on this belief and conducted his campaigns accordingly.

Sherman's Military Strategy

Sherman's Military Strategy is not written down in any document but can be postulated through examination of his writings.

The South is defeated when its people are defeated.

Control the Mississippi River and the West. It is the Key to the War.

Coordinate and squeeze the Confederacy on all fronts.

Geography is important and a key to controlling and defeating the enemy.

Use War of Movement.

Use Defensive Tactics, avoid Frontal Attacks.

Sherman's belief in total war has already been documented. He had other strong views. His fixation on the West is clearly seen in his early letters to his brother and in his letter to Grant. In a letter to Grant on 10 March 1864 he urges him:

Come out West and take to yourself the Mississippi Valley; let us make it dead-sure, and I tell you the Atlantic slope and Pacific shores will follow its destiny as sure as the limbs of a tree live or die with the main trunk! Here lies the seat of the empire and from the West, when our task is done, we will make short work of Charleston and Richmond, and the impoverished coast of the Atlantic.¹⁷

Sherman had learned his lesson at Shiloh and Vicksburg about direct assault. He believed in movement. General D.S. Stanley, one of his subordinates, wrote, "General Sherman never fought a battle, though he had a thousand chances. Partial affairs called battles were fought, but it was always with a fragment of his army. He never had the moral courage to order his whole army into an engagement."¹⁸

This observation was correct but not fair. Sherman had seen the failures of frontal attacks at Shiloh and Vicksburg and was determined, if allowed time, to achieve the desired results with others means. Maneuver warfare was not common in the Civil War and not universally accepted. General Stanley's statement should be taken as factual observation and evidence of Sherman's

advanced ideas on warfare. He developed it over time through his observations and was ahead of his time. Sherman came to the meeting with developed views and ready to discuss them with Grant.

Grant on Sherman

It is helpful to see how General U.S. Grant viewed Sherman. It provides insights not only about Sherman but also into Grant's character. It provides a study of both men. Much is written about how the two successfully fought battles together in the West and worked together in 1864 and 1865 to defeat the South.

The difference in opinion Grant had with Sherman during the Vicksburg Campaign shows an interesting insight of these two men. Sherman opposed Grant's Vicksburg Strategy. He wanted to go back to Memphis and attack Vicksburg overland from the north. Grant wanted to strike off into enemy territory away from his supply lines and attack Vicksburg from the south. He was willing to spend time in difficult maneuver to continue the attack. Sherman was so animate in his views he wanted the corps commanders to vote on their preference between the two proposals.¹⁹

Grant would not for reasons other than military take any course of action that looked like a step backwards. After Vicksburg was taken using Grant's approach, he chided Sherman. In what is today called an after report of he wrote:

Some of our generals failed because they worked out everything by rules. They knew what Frederick did at one

place and Napoleon at another. They are always thinking about what Napoleon would do. Unfortunately for their plans, the rebels would be thinking about something else. I don't underestimate the value of military knowledge but if men make war in slavish observance of rules they will fail.....Even Napoleon showed that; for my impression is that his first success came because he made war in his own way, and not in imitation of others.²⁰

Grant differed from Sherman on what he considered as the key to defeating the enemy. "Every army should move against the enemy."²¹ He was influenced greatly by Sherman but also by others such as his chief of staff, John Rawlins. Rawlins understood the political realities of protecting Washington, D.C. and convinced Grant to come to the East over the advice of Sherman.

Additionally, Grant was not as fixed on holding territory as Sherman. He saw the defeat of the army--not holding territory--as the key to winning a war. As he began his campaign of 1864 he felt it was a waste to use too many men in the border states.²² He needed them to defeat the enemy.

Grant did not support Total War as strongly as Sherman. Sherman wrote General Halleck on 17 September 1863 giving him what amounted to a regional assessment. In this assessment he was very blunt about the social classes of the South and what should be done once the war was over and reconstruction began. He said that the South chose war and had very few rights. Sherman went on to give an evaluation of the classes in the South recommending which were useful to reconstruction efforts and which were not. He even goes as far as recommending one class, represented by Stewart John Morgan, Forrest, and Jackson, be

killed. He ends by saying power and might are much more effective in ruling belligerent people and keeping them in line than any political means.²³

Sherman provided Grant a copy of this letter. Grant wrote Halleck on 19 September commenting, "I think we should do it (Sherman's strategy) with terms held out, that by accepting, they could receive the protection of our laws."²⁴ Grant did not believe that Southern people had forever given up their rights until defeated and was much more conciliatory, maybe tempered more by politics, than Sherman. Grant came to the meeting with similarly strong views. Examining him points out why he held these views. It explains why he operated so well with Sherman.

Grant's Personality

Grant's personality preference fits an INTP. He was an introvert who used intuition and perception along with objective thought. He, like Sherman, relied on thinking and judgment over feeling but, unlike Sherman, was more introverted and used intuition over sensing. As he noted in what is now the Vicksburg after action report sometimes one had to do what he sensed was right. This characteristic made him look at possibilities, not just facts. He could prepare for the future and watch for new opportunities. This type personality is a visionary, being an architect of systems or strategies. He can push organizations to understand the system as a whole with interaction among parts

This clearly describes Grant. But, this personality also has shortcomings. The consequence of this personality preference is the tendency to overindulge in sensory pursuits, such as drinking in excess.²⁵

Grant's Experience

Important experiences prior to 1863 shaped U.S. Grant. Like Sherman he graduated from West Point but unlike Sherman fought in the Mexican War. In this war he obtained the first insight into political military control. He saw General Scott send a very popular General Taylor out of Mexico to neutralize him. Taylor was a Whig, the opposition party, and a Presidential threat to the current administration.²⁶

He resigned from the army and like Sherman had an undistinguished civilian career. His opportunity came when war broke out. He soon had a series of successes in the western theater. The capture of Forts Henry and Donelson, Shiloh, Vicksburg and Chattanooga all added to his reputation.

More importantly he learned from each battle. J.F.C. Fuller talks about these lessons in his book The Generalship of Ulysses S. Grant. He says Grant learned to push forward ammunition at Donelson, the value of a general reserve at Shiloh, and at Vicksburg the value of sticking with a well thought-out plan. Observing the raid of Confederate Van Dorn around Holly Springs, Mississippi, taught him the advantage off living of the land.²⁷

Grant's Thoughts

Grant's experiences led to the development of his strategic thinking. He had a good mind and was a methodical thinker. Like Sherman, he was good at analytical thought and came up with sound decisions. Fuller writes about Grant's ability to see things of strategic importance:

When at Cairo in 1861 he saw the importance of Paducah, after the capture of Donelson he saw the importance of the Mississippi which lead to the Vicksburg Campaign. He saw quite clearly that Chattanooga was the back door to Virginia, Mobile the side door to Georgia, and that once in Federal hands a Confederate force at Chattanooga was threatened in the rear and a Federal force advancing from this town south would have its right flank and then its rear protected.²⁸

Grant came to his meeting with a wealth of experiences and sound strategic ideas on how to win the war. He was the newly appointed Commander and Chief, ready to make decisions to win the War.

Grant's Military Strategy

Going into the Meeting, a credible strategy for Grant would be.

Conquer Armies, It is more important than Territory.

The Confederacy Must be Divided East and West.

Conduct all operations in concert.

Keep the Confederacy From Using Interior Lines.

Move Directly on the Enemy.

Grant's letter of 15 March supports his strategy. He wrote it prior to his meetings with Sherman and shows his thinking.

Grant writes:

I have not yet fully determined upon a plan of campaign for this Spring but will do so before the return of our veteran troops to the field. It will however be my desire to have all parts of the Army, or rather all the Armies, act as much in concert as possible. I would not, at present, advise the abandonment of any portion of territory now held, west of the Mississippi, but commence no move for the further acquisition of territory, unless it be to make that now ours more easily held. I look upon the conquering of the organized armies of the enemy as being of vastly more importance than the mere acquisition of their territory. It may be a part of the plan for the Spring Campaign to move against Mobile. There is one thing General I would urge, and do not know but you have already adopted, and that is of supplying your army, as far as possible, from the occupied. Mules, horses, forage and provisions can be paid for, where taken from the persons who have taken the amnesty oath prescribed by the President, if the oath be taken before the loss of property, with both economy and convenience.²⁹

Grant's strategy is summarized up by a comment by Fuller, "His own idea was to operate against Lee's communications and once he cut them, make use of them in order to operate against Lee's rear.... it is clear that Lee's rear was his objective."³⁰ Grant was set in his mind on how to fight the war going into the meeting.

General Howard on Both Generals

General Oliver O. Howard introduces the difference in the two generals' views about strategy in his observations upon

coming West. He wrote:

It was evident, and did not grow from likeness but unlikeness. They appeared the complements of each other. Where one was strong the other one weak. Grant was reticent who liked meditations and matured plans. He liked to systematize and simplify always bringing sufficient forces. He liked to do unexpected things using prompt offensives to follow the victory. He was best at campaign and battle. Sherman was quick brilliant with a topographical sense. He was extremely patriotic. He was impaired by violent conflict and was best at campaign.³¹

This is a very revealing comment about the two men from a general who served under them. It is a first hand account and supports their strong relationship and their complementary personalities.

Grant/Sherman Personal Relationship

The final aspect to examine is the personal relationship of the two generals. This played an important part in the determination of the final National Military Strategy of 1864. This relationship was solid and a result of many episodes over a long period. Sherman and Grant overlapped for several years at West Point with Sherman the senior cadet. They met in 1853 outside St. Louis when both were trying to make a go of civilian life.

They did not cross paths during the Civil War until Sherman was a training and logistics officer in Paducah, Kentucky doing everything he could to support Grant in his campaign against Ft Donelson. At that time, Sherman was senior to Grant, but it was said that Sherman's willingness to waive rank won Grant's heart and was the beginning of a friendship like that of David and

Jonathan in the Bible.³² This relationship developed and prospered from then on through Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga.

Sherman defended Grant to the newspapers and to the politicians in Washington, through his brother, when he was attacked after Shiloh for excessive casualties. Sherman also praised Grant often and thought him a great General. The letter he wrote Grant on 10 March 1884 best exemplifies this truly strong relationship. Sherman told Grant:

Your strongest feature was "simple faith in success" when you complete your preparation you go into battle without hesitation....no doubt no reserve; and it is that this makes me act in confidence I knew that wherever I was that you thought of me, and if I got in a tight place you would come - if alive.³³

They were also able to talk to each other candidly. In that same letter Sherman congratulates Grant on being named commander and chief of all Union Armies and writes, "my only doubts were as to your knowledge of grand strategy and it books of science and history: but I confess your common sense seems to have supplied all this."³⁴

Grant was not the only beneficiary of this relationship. Grant gave Sherman his second chance after, in December of 1861, he was declared crazy by the newspapers and thought unfit to command by Halleck. Grant gave Sherman a division command, a corps command, and ultimately an army group command. Sherman needed Grant, large and generous, incapable of being disturbed by little ebullitions of impatience and arrogance, who brought out Sherman's pure patriotism and splendid military

genus.³⁵

Macarther writes in Grant and His Generals, "Grant was charmed, interested, and fascinated by Sherman. Sherman relied confidently in the strength and judgment of Grant."³⁶ These two generals shared a relationship stronger than maybe any other in the Civil War.

The two generals were compatible. Their personalities were similar in most aspects except one was intuitive, the other more reliant on facts. They had similar military training and experiences and both had tasted civilian life. Both experienced early success in the war but both came under criticism by the press for their failures. They had many common beliefs. But above all they had the utmost trust and loyalty in each other. The total respect for each other resulted in little criticism of each other privately or publicly. This makes it very difficult to determine who was the actual author of the Strategy of 1864. Each man's refusal to take credit also makes it more difficult. We may never know who was the driving force of the meeting but it is not important. What is important is the result.

The National Military Strategy of 1864

Grant and Sherman completed their meetings on 24 March. Each had brought his ideas to the table. They both influenced each other and the strategy evolved. Grant supports this in his 15 March letter to Banks. Sherman writes General McPherson on 14

March, "I don't know as yet the grand strategy of the next campaign, but on arrival at Nashville, I will catch the main points and will advise you of them."³⁷

Clearly the strategy was formulated at the meetings in Cincinnati. Grant finalized it in the following days. Grant best describes the final strategy in a letter to Sherman on 4 April 1863. Summarizing this letter Grant directs:

General Banks in New Orleans to withdraw troops from Texas, except the Rio Grand area, hold the Mississippi River with minimum required troops, collect soldiers from Missouri and commence operations against Mobile, Alabama.

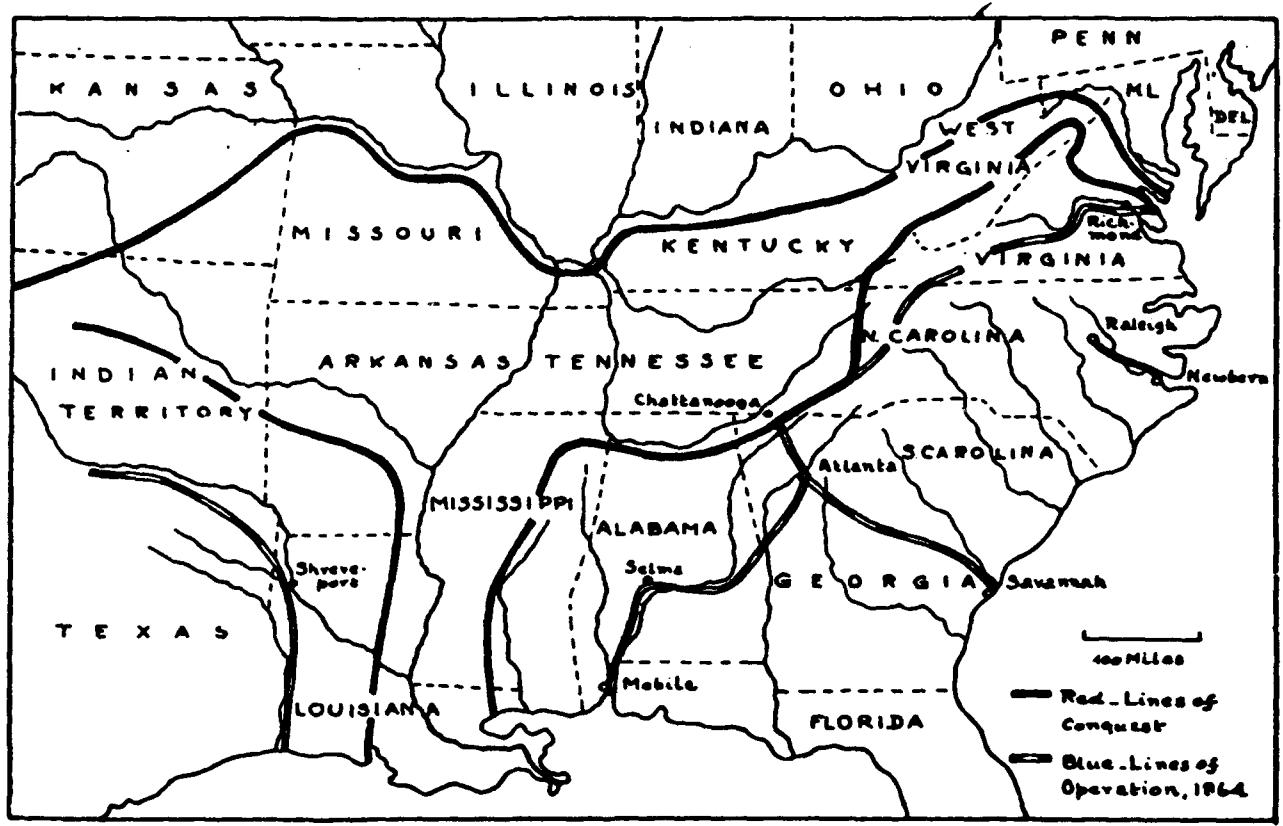
General Butler at Norfolk will join forces with General Gillmore and commence operations against Richmond going up the south side of the James River.

General Sigel collects all available forces and commences operations against the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad that is in the Shenandoah Valley.

General Sherman moves against Johnson's army, staging out of Chattanooga, breaking it up and moving to get into the interior of the enemy as far as possible. He is to inflict all the damage he can against their war resources.

Grant stays with General Meade and the Army of the Potomac reenforced by General Burnside and operates against Lee's Army wherever it is found.³⁸

This National Military Strategy took affect in the spring of 1864. The map on the next page depicts it graphically.



MAP NO. 9—GRANT'S STRATEGICAL MAP FOR HIS 1864 CAMPAIGN

39

Who Was Responsible?

There are several basic tenants of the Military Strategy of 1864. It is difficult to determine who was the author. A hypothesis can be proposed and a responsibility assigned to each element. The basic elements of this strategy and their contributor were:

Coordinated Operations	Both
Prohibit Confederate Use of Interior Lines	Both
Divide the Confederacy East and West	Grant
Cut Important Railroads	Both
Defeat the Enemy's Armies	Grant
Defeat the Confederacy's Ability to Make War	Sherman
Supply the Army off the Land	Both

The strategy was the result of the combining of Grant's and Sherman's strong views. The two men, being very much alike, did not spend much time on agreement at the margins. They were on the same wavelength, and reinforced each other. A few differences existed but they were accommodated. Several of the elements held important by both and became cornerstones of the campaign of 1864. It was flexible enough to allow each general to fight his type of campaign.

Coordination of the armies was a belief by both men and not a great item of discussion. In their letters both acknowledged the absolute importance on keeping the two armies apart. The prior experience of both allowed them to see its great value. Both understood the importance of denying the Confederacy the use of interior lines. It was a major reason for the coordinated offensive. Both saw the result at Chickamauga, when Lee had detached Longstreet's Corps from Virginia to fight in the West. They saw no dire consequences on Lee's forces because of Union inactivity. Cutting the railroad was an objective that supported the prohibition of Confederate interior lines and accepted by

both.

Grant was the advocate of splitting the Confederacy East and West, probably not at the Mississippi River but closer to the eastern mountains. Sherman, on the other hand, always supported control of the Mississippi River and looked at control of the West as a key to victory. By this time Vicksburg was taken and the Mississippi River was controlled. Grant wanted to drive a wedge into the Confederacy with Johnson's army as an objective. He did not look upon control of territory as critical. The focus on the enemy armies was Grant. He saw the need to defeat Lee in the East and Johnson in the West. These were clearly the objectives of the campaign. Sherman was the advocate for the destruction of the Confederacy's ability to wage war. This was his total war concept. This was his strong conviction. He thought it terrible but just. Without Sherman, it would not have existed in the National Military Strategy. Grant tolerated it but did not totally embrace it. Grant did not have that element in his own strategy but recognized its value and accommodated it in a more politically feasible manner.

Examining what Grant writes on Total War over time is very interesting. Initially he was totally against it. Over time, perhaps because of his experiences and association with Sherman, he modified his position. On 16 February 1862, Grant issued General Field Orders Number 16. "Pillaging and appropriating public property is positively prohibited and officers are particularly enjoined to see the enforcement of this order."⁴⁰

On 26 March 1862 Grant wrote to Sherman cautioning him on his operations:

General Meeks reports to me that the party sent to bring in cotton in addition to executing what they were there for, carried off three mules and a horse, also set fire to one of his houses. Some of the men put out the fire before much injury was done. However, our men must learn not to exceed their orders. The horse and mules must be returned, and the officers in charge of the party arrested and tried, or reprimanded, if guilty, according to the degree of guilt.⁴¹

Later Grant wrote to Sherman:

I do not calculate upon the possibility of supplying the Army with full rations from Grand Gulf. I know it will be impossible without constructing additional roads. What I do expect however is to get what rations of hard bread, coffee and salt we can and make the country furnish the balance.⁴²

In his 14 March letter to Banks he mentions that he should supply his army of the land. But he makes sure he impresses upon him to pay for it as long as stipulations are adhered to.

Grant's final opinion on the subject is shown in his General Order of 30 April 1964:

SIR: The following instructions, which will not be printed, are furnished by order of the Secretary of War for your information and guidance, and are to be sent by you to officers under your command, to whom they will apply:

I. Generals commanding armies and army corps in the field will take proper measures to supply, so far as may be possible, the wants of their troops in animals and provisions from the territory through which military operations are conducted. Private property so taken will be received and accounted for in accordance with existing orders. Special care will be taken to remove horses, mules, live-stock, and all means of transportation from hostile districts infested by guerrilla bands of rebels.

II. Commanding officers will establish proper regulations in accordance with usages and customs of war for enforcement of this order.⁴³

Grant was for controlled forage but never publicly approved total war.

Sherman's major influence to the strategy was Total War. Grant treated Sherman differently on this subject than his other generals, perhaps because it was Sherman's concept. Grant understood it and was confident Sherman would execute it. This was new to warfare at that time and a unique element to the strategy.

It is interesting to see that in his implementing instructions Grant gives all other generals only a military objective. He gives Sherman a military and an economic objective. Additionally Grant writes to Sherman, "I will not propose to lay down on you a campaign, but simply to lay down the work it is desirable to have done and leave you free to execute."⁴⁴

It cannot be said Sherman was the only influence on Grant. Grant was his own man. Catton supports this in his book Grant Takes Command. Catton relates that Grant told his intimates, "he would not take over this new command if it meant burying himself in the Capitol, and that he originally planned to establish himself in Chattanooga and go with Thomas' Army on a drive to Atlanta."⁴⁵ The Strategy coming out of the meeting was influenced by subsequent discussions with others. Grant had discussions with Generals McPherson, Grenville Dodge, Logan, Rawlins, and Sheridan. Rawlins is attributed in convincing Grant that he must stay East, meet and conquer Lee and fight the final duel. He considered this correct militarily and politically important.⁴⁶ Sherman may not have gotten command of the Western

Armies if others had not influenced Grant to go East. But, clearly Sherman was a major influence with Grant in the Spring of 1864.

What Led to Success

This strategy was set primarily by the two generals. Sherman's major contribution was his idea of taking war to the people and defeating the enemy by defeating the people. Grant's major contribution was coordinated efforts moving directly on the enemy and defeating the armies. On the surface this appears disjointed. Why did it succeed?

The success was the strategy being general enough to allow independent operations and actions by the two generals and their armies. In the East Grant was able to move on the enemy and stay engaged with Lee until its final surrender. Sherman was able to strike at Atlanta in a war of movement and conquer territory and defeat the will of the people. Sherman actually never went after the western army. It stayed intact until after Lee surrendered. Instead he kept up his end of the agreement made at Cincinnati by keeping the Confederate western army occupied reacting to his successes conquering territory.

Which tenant of the strategy was most important in winning the war? Many believe Sherman's total war concept was. Sherman in his letters writes about a conversation with Grant's son. He

writes:

Fred Grant told me that in his later days his father was more and more recognizant of truth that I had been his most loyal friend throughout his military career, that his memoirs now in hand of his publishers will have evidence to that effect, and therein he distinctly gives me entire credit for the conception and execution of the March to the Sea--and that more importantly campaigns through the Carolinas.⁴⁷

Grant, while following his strong belief of the importance of defeating Lee's Army used some of Sherman's total war. He allowed General Phil Sheridan, one of his theater commanders, to execute total war during his Shenandoah operations. He burned the countryside to preclude this breadbasket region from supplying Lee's Army to the south. Sherman was extremely successful executing the strategy. At one point there were people who proposed making him equal or even a superior to Grant. He would have none of this. This is more proof of their loyalty and friendship that created great synergism which lead to success.

Conclusion

The March Strategy set by Sherman and Grant set the course of the war and lead to Victory. Grant as Commander and Chief of all Armies logically was very influential. General Sherman, almost a brother to Grant, was also influential at the meetings. He convinced Grant that total war was important. Grant recognized it but directed it and tried to control it in a more palatable form. The strategy was sound. It had the best

thoughts of these two men. It allowed independent actions and flexibility. It put the South in a death grip. Neither Grant's nor Sherman's strategy alone may have worked as well. It may never happen again where two men discuss, agree, disagree, compromise, and put together a plan so successful.

Endnotes

- 1.W. T. Sherman, Memoirs of General W.T. Sherman (New York: Literary Classics of the United States Inc., 1990), 463.
- 2.Richard Wheeler, We Knew William Tecumseh Sherman (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1977), 62.
- 3.Ulysses S. Grant, The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967), volume 10, 240.
- 4.Ibid., 245-247.
- 5.Ibid., 252.
- 6.Sherman, 491-492.
- 7.Ibid., 491.
- 8.Sandra Krebs Hirsh and Jean M. Kummerow, Introduction to Type in Organizations (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1990), 10.
- 9.Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), vol. 24, 216-217.
- 10.Hirsh and Kummerow, 19.
- 11.Wheeler, 35.
- 12.Rachel S. Thorndike, The Sherman Letters: Correspondence between General and Senator Sherman from 1837 to 1891 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons 1894), 113-14.
- 13.Ibid., 120-121.
- 14.Liddell B. Hart, Sherman (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1958), 428.
- 15.Ibid., 426.
- 16.Ibid.
- 17.Sherman, 428-429.

18. Edward C. Macarther, Grant and His Generals (New York: The McBride Company, Inc., 1953), 290.

19. Ibid., 280-281.

20. Ibid., 281-282.

21. Bruce Catton, Grant Takes Command (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968), 138.

22. Ibid.

23. Sherman, 360-367.

24. Grant, volume 9, 221-222.

25. Hirsh and Kummerow, 9-11, 13, 28.

26. J.F.C. Fuller, The Generalship f Ulysses S. Grant (New York: Da Capo Press, Inc. 1858), 71.

27. Ibid., 187-188.

28. J.F.C. Fuller, Grant & Lee (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 256-257.

29. Grant, volume 10, 220-221.

30. Fuller, Grant & Lee, 257.

31. Macarther, 284-285.

32. Wheeler, 26.

33. Hart, 28.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid., 26.

36. Macarther, 292.

37. Sherman, 433-434

38. Ibid., 490.

39. Fuller, Grant & Lee, map no. 9.

40. Grant, Volume 4, 219-220.

41. Ibid., 426.

42. Ibid., volume 8, 183.

43. The War of the Rebellion-A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1980), Series III, vol. 5, 250.

44. Hart, 232.

45. Canton, 132-133.

46. Macarther, 290.

47. Sherman, 343.

Bibliography

Catton, Bruce. Grant Takes Command. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968.

Fuller, J.F.C., Grant & Lee. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.

The Generalship Of Ulysses S. Grant. New York: Da Capo Press, 1958.

Grant, Ulysses S. The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967.

Hart, Liddell B. Sherman. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1958.

Hirsh, Sandra Krebs and Jean M. Kummerow. Introduction to Type in Organizations. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1990.

Macarther, Clarence Edward. Grant and His Generals. New York: The McBride Company, Inc., 1953.

Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911.

Sherman, William T. Home Letters of General Sherman. New York: Scriber's Sons, 1909.

Memoirs of General W.T. Sherman. Washington: The Library Of Congress. 1875, 1886. Reprinted, New York: Literary Classics of the United States, Inc., 1990.

The War of the Rebellion-A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880.

Thorndike, Rachel S. The Sherman Letters: Correspondance Between General and Senator Sherman from 1837 to 1891. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894.

Walters, John B. Merchant of Terror. New York: The Boobs-Merril Company, Inc., 1973.

Wheeler, Richard. We Knew William Tecumseth Sherman. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1977.